

## TAPE INDEX

NARRATOR Jeannette Lyons

INTERVIEWER Phyllis Lotz

PLACE Lyons Home

DATE Sept. 14, 1979

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Interview with Jeannette Lyons, Interview 2, SYValley Pioneers  
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Interviewer: Phyllis Lotz  
Transcriber: Phyllis Lotz  
Begin Tape 1 B, Side 1

Lyons: These recollections will go back at least 75 years and in cases almost 100. Memories that I have from my youth and also things that have been told me about the people who lived here in the Valley many years ago. I'll begin with Ballard since it is the oldest of the communities. Among the first people to come to the Valley before Ballard was established as a settlement was my Uncle Joseph Smith who came to the Valley from Pennsylvania where he was a druggist. He had married my Mother's sister, Mary. He came out first by himself on account of his health and was so enthusiastic about California and particularly the Valley in which we now live that he sent for his family. They built an old Victorian house between Ballard as it now exists and Los Olivos. It is now called the Los Olivos Ranch and is the property of people named Hobson. Uncle Joe later sold the place to A.M. Boyd, Alden March Boyd, who had come from New York State and Uncle Joe moved to San Luis Obispo. Mr. Boyd and his cousin A.S. Boyd lived on the same hill. They planted olive trees and went into the business of producing olive oil down below the Mission on what is now called the Duff Ranch. Mr. A.M. Boyd had two daughters, Joan and Jessie. Joan married Richard Bard, the son of Senator Bard of Ventura County, and Jessie married a man who was a plantation manager in India or Burma whose name was Jim O'Shay. Mr. A.S. Boyd had three children, Olive, Janet and Stewart. All of these children attended the Ballard School at one time. Olive and Janet did not marry. Stewart married someone in Santa Barbara. About diagonally across the way (Alamo Pintado Rd) was



the Rudolph place. The house is no longer there. There were two children in the family, Link and Emma. Emma was very much admired by Peter Montenaro and Jake Snyder who paid her much attention. Below the Boyd place was the Muncton house. Mr. Muncton was a blacksmith and had two children, Carrol and Ella. Carrol married Gertie Laher and Ella married Lewis Shanklin. Then below the Muncton place was the house now the property of Norman Davison, formally the home of Grace and Edgar Davison, my sister Grace. It was first occupied by Eckman Family. Below that on Alamo Pintado was an old house that is still there and it was occupied by Mrs. Lewis, who had been Mrs. Hobson first. She had two grandchildren living with her, Grace and Madge. Then further down Alamo Pintado was Pete Barns, blacksmith, and across the way next to the hill was the home of J.J. Hobson. Mr. Hobson operated a harvester known as a thrashing machine that moved from ranch to ranch harvesting the grain. Many men of the Valley worked on on the harvester in the summers. The highest wages received for the workers was \$4 a day and they worked from 4 in the morning to 8 at night. Then coming from the south (on Alamo Pintado) is an adobe, the Alamo Pintado Adobe and was built by a group of Englishmen, called "remittance men", who came here in the early days and settled. The first was Max Dormer who was one of the first to be buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery. He died at the age of 23. There were a number of these Englishmen who came. One was named Kidd, and Cyril Lamb, he had a ranch called Los Amoles, that is now Santa Ynez Oakes. Daniel William Basil Alexander was another Englishman. They contributed a great deal to the community in the early days. Mr. Alexander was an accomplished actor and graduated from Oxford. He sang in the choir. The adobe was built during that period. Next coming north on what is known as Lewis Street was the



old Shanklin house. A two story house no longer there. Mrs. Shanklin had been a cook in the mining camps in Alaska and when they moved to the Valley she kept summer boarders, women from Santa Barbara who came up. In the Shanklin family was Effie, Linnie, Harry, George, Lowell. Lowell married Ella Muckton and they lived in what is now the Swenson house on Lewis Street, to the south. Dr. Oliver lived on Lewis Street. He was a homopath doctor dispensing sugar covered pills. They had one son, Fred who was correspondant to the Press in Santa Barbara. We have in the (Historical) Museum a scrapbook which contains the clippings from the paper and written by Fred Oliver. He was a peculiar character. He married Winnie Smith, the Postmasters daughter, and they had one son. Coming a little further was the Munch house. Mr. Munch was a driver for one of the freight wagons that carried produce down to Gaviota in the early days to be shipped to ports along the coast. He had been a driver over Gyger Grade in early days and had the reputation of being the only man who could turn a six horse team around on the narrow Gaviota Wharf. They had three children, Charlie, Will, and Carrie. Carrie went to Ballard school when I did and also Will. Charlie married Ida DeVaul. Coming to the corner of Lewis and Baseline which was called Cynthia Street then, after Mrs. Cynthia Ballard Lewis, the house on the corner was owned by Dr. and Mrs. Gillespie, who had come here in the late '70's. He had come out for his health and they had been friends of my Mother and Father in Pennsylvania. They brought with them a nut and planted it and it is now one of the tallest trees in the Valley.

Among the many people who came in early days were the Barnes brothers. Pete, who had a blacksmithshop, Jim, who moved to Los Olivos and Frank, who lived in the Shanklin house, and Tommy who lived with Frank, and Bill who lived in the house next to the now Ballard Store Restaurant. Bill (Barnes) had a daughter named



Lulu who was somewhat retarded. She had a ruckus voice and insisted on singing in the choir. The Barnes, Uncle Tommie and Frank were quite musical. Frank had four children, Sally, Lottie, Landon and Delbert. Landon is still living in the Valley. Pete Barnes had one son Charlie. A relative of the Barnes was the Cooper Family. They lived here in Ballard and later moved to Los Olivos. Frank, Kensil, and Madge Cooper in that Family. Jim Barnes had a daughter, Mae who married a Brown. There was also the Stewart Family. Sid Stewart lived on the corner of Cottonwood and Cynthia St. He did not marry. Hank lived at the corner of Lewis and Cynthia Sts. He had married an Indian from the Zanja de Cota Reservation and it was rumored that her Indian husband had cut off her ears. She always wore her hair long and over her ears. We children would peer into the house to see if we could see this woman. On Cottonwood Drive there was another Stewart, Tom. Tom had four boys, Nathan, Jess, Willie and Waldo. They all had white hair, and Waldo had fits. I remember his Mother sent to a man who was supposed to be able to cure things like that, his name was Francis Truth, he later ended up in the penitentiary. Mrs. Stewart bought a handkerchief that was to lay on Waldo's chest and was to cure him of fits. He was known as Tot Stewart, they all went to Ballard School. Down Cottonwood St. was the Hall Family, Emmett Hall. There was always a new baby in the family and my Mother would be called upon to assist at the birth. Elmer, Harry, Inez, Ramona and several others that I can't remember. Just below the Halls and on the same street was the Jerry Lahr Family. Mr. Lahr was very talkative and always started a story with, "I knowed a hog..." but no one would let him finish. There was Amy, she had red hair, Eddie, who was in my class, Gertie, who married Carrol Muncton, and that was a shot-gun marriage, Vernie, Lida, and Fannie. None of them married locally except Gertie, and she had a baby by Carrol Muncton and they made him marry her. That was one of the early scandals of the



Valley. Up opposite the school house in a grove of Eucalyptus trees which are gone now, and where the Wallens live now, was the Lewis house. George Lewis was the founder of Ballard. He had married Mr. Ballard's widow, Cynthia. The Lewis's had one daughter, Mildred. Across from the Lewis's was the Methodist Church, and later abandoned. The building was made into a house where the Frank Barnes lived. Then down on Lewis St. on the west side was the Ballard Post Office. The first post office in the Valley was a dry-goods box nailed to a tree. The mail came in on horseback and was put into these little parts of the box. In 1885 Robert Smith who had been a lighthouse keeper at Pt. Conception was appointed Postmaster of Ballard. The office was built and as far back as I can remember that was where we got our mail, and Uncle Robert sold ancient candy and cigars, and plug tobacco. He married a woman who had come from Michigan. He was 75 when he married Aunt Eliza. They lived in a house next to the Postoffice. Before he married, Winnie Smith his daughter, who was my first Sunday School teacher, kept house for her father. I remember we used to go to Sunday School parties that Winnie gave. She would shell sunflower seeds and give us seeds, sugar and milk at these parties, and it was delicious. I remember it so well. Winnie Smith married Fred Oliver. Aunt Eliza had come out with her nephews the Raymond Boys from Michigan. The boys lived in Santa Ynez. On the corner of Cynthia and Cottonwood was the Snyder house. Mrs. Snyder was a sister of Tom Stewart. They had one son, Jake Snyder. On Alamo Pintado, the G.A. Davison family lived. Mr. Davison was a blacksmith and they were from Nova Scotia. The three blacksmiths, Davison, Munton, and Barnes were all on Alamo Pitado. It was necessary in almost all communities to have a blacksmith or two, because the freight wagons had to be kept running and all the horses had to be shod.



On the corner of Lewis and Baseline, then Cynthia, the north corner was a store which was run by Aunt Jennie Smith, a sister to my Uncle Joe Smith. Aunt Jennie was an old maid and she was the Postmistress. It was said that she examined each letter that came through and could tell from the postmark and so forth that she accumulated a great deal of gossip which she spread. She always seemed to know when a wedding was coming forth, or any event in the Valley. Just to the left, where the Swansons live now was the Lowell Shanklin house, its the original house, with additions. I told you before that Lowell Shanklin had married Ella Munceton and they had two children, one of whom is still living. Albert Shanklin, who was about the age of my brother, Sam, and his sister, Grace, who is still living. Albert moved to Lompoc and became quite prosperous as an agriculturists in Lompoc. Further out(east) on Baseline was a Scotsman named Thomas White. There was also a family in quite early days named Delano who lived between Ballard and Santa Ynez. I can't tell exactly where the property was. They claimed to be related to Franklin D. Rossevelt that was before he became president. The children were Roland Delano who married Viola Hill, and Daisy Delano who was retarded. A family named Hill lived near Ballard and just recently the grandson of Abner Hill who I went to school with, came into the (Historical) Museum. There was Viola Hill who married Roland Delano, Laura married one of the sons of a early family, DeVaul, Abner, John, James and Myrtle, and Sam Hill was the oldest and married Lizzie Waugh of Los Olivos. The Hills all attended the Ballard School.

The Ballard School was the center of all the social activities in early days. It was the first school in the Valley and the land was given by George Lewis and was built in 1883. Up to that time there had been a school on Refugio, the Catholic School, but it was discontinued after the Ballard School was built, and all the children came there. The school was used for Saturday Night dances



and for church services. Before a dance, the seats had to be unscrewed and placed outside, then replaced again for Sunday School and church. Some times the dances lasted until 4 in the morning, and someone was kept rather busy restoring the seats. I remember going to school and finding my desk in a different place. There was one occasion where one of the young remittance men who had celebrated a little too much on the Queen's birthday rode his horse into a dance at the Ballard School. There were debates there on such submects as "Which is more Destructive, Fire or Water," "Which is more dangerous, The Sword or Gun," "The Story of the Lady and the Tiger." They also had public meetings there. Church was held there until the Presbyterian Church was built in 1898.

The Remittance Men were younger sons in English families who did not inherit, but went anywhere and were paid once a month by their families. They did not inherit land or property. Mr. Alexander lived by himself up in a little cabin above where Tom Petersen is on the hill south of Alamo Pintado. He was very attentive to Mildred Lewis the daughter of Geo. Lewis. Later he became a chemist for an oil company and subsequently married the heiress of Absorbine Jr. Up to the time of the establishment of Oak Hill Cemetery many people had their own private cemeteries. Such was the Buell Family in Buellton. But in 1887 there was the first meeting of the Ballard Cemetery Assoc. And at that meeting my father gave an acre of land and two other men, Dormer was one. So there were three acres to establish the cemetery. Laterly a writer for a magazine, Mr. Townsend, became interested in the story of the cemetery, he went over to interview Mr. Abbott and Mr. Abbott had discovered the notes of that meeting buried under a pile of dust. Edgar Davison became clerk of the association. The Ballard Presbyterian Church was built in 1898 during a dry year. There was no work for anybody because there had been no rain to grow crops so it was decided to



build a church, with volunteer labor. My father designed the building and was chief carpenter. Even the Chinese on the thrashing machine contributed a little bit of money, money was terribly scarce. People gave as little as 25¢. The lumber bill for the church was a little over \$300.00. Different people were assigned jobs, Mr. Davison and Mr. Muncion, who were both blacksmiths here in Ballard and had not been on speaking terms for several years had been assigned to lay the floor of the church, one starting on one side and the other man starting at the opposite end. By the time they reached the middle they became friends again. Frank Barnes went about raising money to buy the bell which was purchased from Montgomery Ward and the first couple to be married in the church was Laura Hill and Billy DeVaul. My sister Grace was married there in 1902.

The Presbyterians for awhile had been using the Methodist Church to hold services until a hellfire and brimstone preacher came to town and he kicked the Presbyterians out. When Ballard was founded someone came in with a saloon but most of the people of Ballard were church going folk and the saloon did not prosper, so it went on to Santa Ynez to join 11 or 12 others. The first school in the area was held in the abandoned saloon, then the school was held in Geo. Lewis's granery.

Los Olivos was founded in 1887, it came into being because of the coming of the narrow gauge railway. Among the first people to arrive were the Matteis. Mr. Mattei was an Italian-Swiss. He married Lucy Fisher in San Luis Obispo in 1879. He had been a horse trader. The Matteis decided to build a tavern because the narrow gauge was coming in. It would serve as a place for guests and as a stage stop. There were five Mattei boys, Fred, who remained in charge of the tavern until the time of his death in the early 1970's, Clarence, who became a world famous portrait painter and whose portraits of Herbert Hoover and Mary Pickford are in the Metropolitan Art Gallery in New York City, Frank, the only one who married locally, and who died fairly young, Charlie, who also was very gifted artistically but did not have the education



in Paris that Clarence had, and Bert, who became a vice president in the Honolulu Oil Company in San Francisco. The tavern served the local people and others coming in on the narrow gauge, and the personnel of the railroad. Another family who came early to Los Olivos were the Keenan Family. As far as I know they had two children, Lulu who married Frank Barnes, and By who married Miss Fisher. The Davis Family, Will Davis came from Indiana and arrived in 1887. They brought with them a large family, Dallas, Bernard, Katurah, Etelka, Nora, Della, and little Indiana, who died at the age of five. They were befriended by the Coiner Family and camped out until their house was built. There seemed to be quite a colony of people from Indiana, mostly related, who came to Los Olivos.

The Milburn Sides had two children, Carl and Dora. Milburn started a hardware store in Los Olivos which continued after his death by his son Carl. Dallas Davis eventually had a store there where his sister Katurah worked as clerk. In that store they sold everything from harvesters to wedding rings. Before Dallas established his store two Jewish brothers, Jules and Emil Hyman had the Los Olivos store, one of the first stores, and we did our trading there. Emil Hyman was a devoted suitor to Miss Pinkham Ballard Schoolteacher, who was one of my first teachers.

My friend Jane Wallen will discuss the Hartley Family.

There were two brothers Lewis and John Lartley who came to the Valley, another brother, Ben did not come. Lewis married Amanda and their children were Winnie, Mabel, Cora, Ernest, and Jim. John Hartley married Samantha, and their children were Jim, George, Walter, Pearl, and Herman. Winnie married George Smith. The Smiths had Ronald, Eunice Harry, Alvy, George and Edna. Mabel married Sheb Downs, and children were Maggie, Howard, Lloyd and Allen. Cora married Fred Tunnell and had Mike, James and Muriel. Ernest Hartley married Dica Smith and had Gordon and one girl we don't know the name of. Jim Hartley remained a bachelor. George Hartley married Madeline, Walter never Married, Pearl married Dale Brockman, Herman married



Stella Cole.

Another family in Los Olivos was the Tunnells. I remember one of the Tunnell girls telling me that their father had come from Northern California, had sold their place there and received gold pieces for the sale. They remember pulling down the blinds in the room while their father poured out the gold pieces on the table before taking the money to the bank in Santa Maria. Mr. Tunnell was a horse doctor, as we called them in those days. His treatment was to bathe the animal if it was cut by washing the wound with Cutacura Soap and then smear axel grease on to keep the flies away. In that family there was Fred, who married Cora Hartley, Russell, Eb, Sadie, who married Frank Buell, Gertie who married Richard Torrence and Sybel.

Among other people from Indiana were the Browns. They had three sons, twins, Dilbert and Delbert, and another boy. They lived for awhile in the Ballard Adobes with a relative named Ashbriner. We were told that Mr. Ashbriner swallowed a handful of pebbles if he needed a laxative. He also believed that healing warts was to steal a disrag. These are stories we delighted to hear.

The Whitcher Family were early residents. Mr. Whitcher was a blacksmith, his wife was one of the Coiner twins. They had four children, Lottie married a local schoolteacher, George, Chester, Clara married a farmer named Isiac Salm.

In the Davis Family, Katurah married late in life, to Carl Campbell, Etelka married Will downs, Dallas married Mame Dailey, Della married someone outside the town, and Nora also.

An early schoolteacher in Los Olivos was Sue Hudson. About 15 miles from Los Olivos is the only natural lake in Santa Barbara County, Zaca Lake. A Frenchman named Libeu took up land around the lake and then the land went to his sons, John and Joseph. The boys were early forest rangers in what is now Los Padres Forest. John had 5 daughters, and Joe married Bertha Kleine, and they had two sons, Laurence and Leon.



Mr. and Mrs. Davison who came from near San Francisco had one son Edgar, who married my sister Grace. They lived in what was the Ekman house on Alamo Pintado Rd. Edgar played the organ in the Presbyterian Church for 50 years. He was a forest ranger when my sister married him in 1902. Later he became the caretaker of Oak Hill Cemetery.

End of Tape 1 B, The Pioneers of Ballard and Los Olivos